



# Superintendent Search Service

**Idaho School  
Boards Association, Inc.**  
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The ISBA Superintendent Search Service assists the Board to find the best superintendent for their district or charter school.

SuperintendentSearch   
by Idaho School Boards Association



# ISBA's role is to assist the Board in making the **best decision possible** for its District or Charter

## About ISBA:

The ISBA is a non-profit, service organization providing various services to its association members. Founded in 1942, and representing more than 800 local school Board members throughout Idaho, ISBA strives to improve public education for all Idahoans through the continued development of community leaders.

The ISBA provides school Board members with the information, training, and support needed to serve their districts and charters. The ISBA works to develop highly trained and effective board/superintendent teams to help positively affect student achievement.

## About ISBA's Superintendent Search Service:

The ISBA will be involved with the superintendent search to the extent the Board determines. We have two main options for service as outlined later in this document. Our service is designed to lead the Board through the selection process assisting in the recruitment, selection, and development of an educational leader who can multiply his or her talents to mobilize the teaching and learning forces within the district or charter educational community. Hiring a new superintendent is one of the most important decisions a Board will make! Our job is to facilitate the process, advise the Board, and professionally handle the numerous details involved in this important task. ISBA will ensure transparency and confidentiality throughout the process.

## About the Service:

The ISBA launched this service four years ago and has completed 11 full and partial superintendent searches for Idaho school districts ranging in size from 151 students to 14,500.

*"I absolutely would recommend this service. I'm convinced we would have made a mess of this process without the ISBA and their consultant. There is no doubt in my mind it was worth every penny." - Board Member, Payette SD*

# WHAT WE DO

## 1 Establish the search timeline:

- Propose a timeline for the opening and search process that will attract the largest possible pool of candidates.

## 2 Determine key qualifications:

- Review the district's mission, vision, and strategic plan.
- Work with the Board to determine the key qualifications and expectations for the next superintendent.

## 3 Advertise the opening & recruit candidates:

- Provides a variety of marketing methods to promote the opening around the country.
- Develop an application form to retrieve the most-needed information as candidates apply.
- Develop a professionally-designed brochure that includes the details of the position, the District, and how to apply. This is mailed and emailed to potential candidates throughout surrounding states.
- Post the vacancy and brochure on several websites.
- Post the information on ISBA's website, Facebook page, LinkedIn, and other online sources.
- Share the information with education leadership departments at various universities.
- Share the information with the National School Boards Association's Superintendent Searchers group (NASS.)
- Provide information and materials to interested candidates and field all incoming calls and correspondence.
- Maintain communication with all applicants.
- Maintain electronic application files.

## 4 Review applications:

- Thoroughly review each application and compare it with the qualifications and expectations as determined by the Board.

- ISBA will provide feedback to the Board regarding each applicant. As experts in the field, we have reviewed hundreds of applications and can identify certain areas of concern as well as positive things to note in application packets.

## 5 Selection of Finalists:

- Assist the Board by providing information as they discuss the pros and cons of each candidate.
- Notify each candidate of their status with regards to the superintendent search.

## 6 Conduct Reference Checks:

- Once the Board selects candidates to move forward, ISBA will work with the Board on reference check protocol so the Board can conduct in-depth phone reference checks.
- Provide a list of questions and instructions so each Board member asks the same questions to each reference.

## 7 Conduct Interviews:

- Will schedule interviews with the selected finalists.
- ISBA will assist the Board in determining interview questions based on selected criteria which may include, but not be limited to:
  - Board and stakeholder goals and expectations;
  - Strengths and weaknesses of the district;
  - Challenges facing the district; and
  - What the Board sees as most important, which could include experience, field of expertise, backgrounds in particular areas, such as finance, curriculum and instruction, community relations, staffing and evaluation, etc.
- ISBA will be on-site with the Board to ensure the interview process runs smooth.
- Provide the Board with training on the interview process and what to expect.
- Provide the Board with responses to listen for during the interview process.

## 8 Selection of Superintendent & Contract Discussion:

- If the Board chooses, we can be on-site as the Board discusses the qualities of each candidate and who is the best candidate for the district.
- Can provide information regarding open meeting law and when to go in and out of executive session.
- Can assist the Board as they discuss contract terms with the selected candidate. We can provide salary information from similar-sized and neighboring districts.

## 9 Other Assistance:

- Can provide the district with sample agendas including Idaho Code sections to use for discussions related the superintendent search.
- Can assist the district with a community forum.
- Can provide sample press releases for the district to use related to the superintendent search.

## Superintendent Search Contacts:

The ISBA is staffed with full-time employees and contractors who are experts in their fields of work. Each person brings a unique background, experience, and skill set. The primary contacts for the Superintendent Search Service are ISBA Chief Deputy, Misty Swanson, and ISBA Consultant, Christine Donnell.



### Misty Swanson

ISBA Chief Deputy

Misty Swanson has worked for ISBA for 12 years serving in a variety of roles during her tenure. Misty assists districts and charters with various components during the superintendent search process including managing

the marketing of the opening, creating the application form and packet requirements, conducting research on candidates as well as superintendent salaries and benefits throughout the State. She also corresponds with candidates, conducts reference checks, prepares press releases when needed, and assists throughout the entire search.



### Christine Donnell

ISBA Consultant

Christine Donnell spent 37 years in the education field starting as a teacher, then principal, HR Director, Assistant Superintendent, and Superintendent. The majority of her career was spent serving in Idaho's

largest school district, Meridian School District (now West Ada), where she served as Superintendent for six years. Christine's primary focuses during superintendent searches include working with the Board to determine candidate qualifications, application review, reference check protocol, assisting with interviews of finalists and community forums, as well as assisting throughout the entire search.

*"Without question I would recommend the ISBA. This service was invaluable to us. We could not have gone through this process without Misty and Christine. Both were so professional, personal, and were willing to help us in every area of the search. This was such an overwhelming task, and we sincerely appreciate the time and effort both of them put forth." - Board Member, Twin Falls SD*

*"Christine was an invaluable asset in the search - she guided us in a path to understand what we needed to know but always let us make the decision." - Board Member, Fremont Co. SD*

# 2018-2019 Superintendent Search Fees:

**Option 1: Marketing of Opening - \$3,500**  
( Please See Steps 1-4 )

**Option 2: Marketing + Full Search - \$8,500**  
( Please See Steps 1-8 )

## Additional Fee:

**Travel time** to/from school district when meeting with the Board and/or candidates **\$30 / hour**

**Travel expenses** (flight, meals, hotels, mileage)  
As incurred (Incurred on the most time-efficient, cost-effective option available)

The State Department of Education has authorized a portion of the fee to be reimbursed through the State-approved governance training. Contact ISBA for more details on this.

Contact us:

Phone: (208) 854-1476

Email: [misty@idsba.org](mailto:misty@idsba.org)

*"This was absolutely the best money we spent at the district this year. Our Board could not have done this on our own. The amount of work involved, the steps involved, and the obligation to get it "right" is an immense undertaking. The process ISBA has created is a great process and both Misty and Christine create great confidence and worked just as hard if not harder than the Board. From the letter that went out about our superintendent's retirement, to the brochure, application essays, community survey, application review, reference check process, meet and greet, interviews and ultimate decision- every single step of the way, Misty and Christine were there to guide the process." - Board Member, Payette SD*



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ISBA is an active member of the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS.)

